

## Secondary Three to Five cross-boundary students to resume classes next Monday

Subsequent to the gradual class resumption of local students, Secondary Three to Secondary Five (S3 to S5) cross-boundary students (CBS) will resume classes next Monday (June 15).

A spokesman for the Education Bureau (EDB) said, "The EDB has been paying close attention to the development of the epidemic and the resumption of classes of local students since late May, and working together with local schools, relevant departments of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and Shenzhen Municipal People's Government in planning the class resumption arrangements for S3 to S5 CBS. With the concerted efforts and collaborations of various parties, the arrangements for S3 to S5 CBS are finalised and they will resume classes on June 15."

The spokesman added, "The class resumption arrangements for CBS involve a range of issues including epidemic prevention and control policies of Hong Kong and Shenzhen, immigration control as well as transportation arrangements. The class resumption arrangements for CBS should be made with the safety and health of students, teachers and the public as the prime concern, and with due regard to the capacity of all parties. Therefore, class resumption for CBS, at this stage, is limited to S3 to S5."

The HKSAR Government and Shenzhen Municipal People's Government will introduce special arrangements at the two boundary control points from Monday to Friday to facilitate CBS to travel to and from school via either Shenzhen Bay Port (advance opening hours for arrival immigration procedures of southbound CBS from 6.30am to 8.30am) or Futian/Lok Ma Chau Spur Line Port (with special arrangements to open for arrival/departure immigration procedures of CBS from 6.30am to 8.30am (southbound) and from 2pm to 4.30pm (northbound)). To prevent unnecessary social contact with other personnel and reduce risks of infection, CBS will take school buses to travel between the boundary control points in Hong Kong and schools, and they have to wear masks on school buses to ensure hygiene.

The spokesman added, "To alleviate parents' financial burden, the EDB will provide a special transportation subsidy to this batch of CBS (S3 to S5) for the approximately one-month period of class resumption, amounting to the difference between the transportation cost of the temporary school bus service and the average cost of taking public transportation. The extra burden of CBS families should be relieved."

Students will be subject to the health protection measures of Hong Kong and Shenzhen when they cross the boundary control points every day, including going through temperature screening and submission of health declaration forms to the staff of the Department of Health (DH). In schools, same as local students, CBS are placed under health and precautionary surveillance, including measuring body temperature upon entering and leaving the school

premises, ensuring students wear masks and requesting students to follow the health protection measures at schools, etc. Parents or guardians of CBS should keep the students under surveillance, including taking students' body temperature every day before school and remaining vigilant on students' health condition. CBS are required to present proof of a negative nucleic acid test result within seven days when crossing the boundary control points in Shenzhen and declare health conditions during clearance procedures. Subject to meeting the relevant conditions, CBS can in principle be exempted from compulsory quarantine in Hong Kong and medical surveillance by means of centralised quarantine in Shenzhen.

"For the class resumption arrangement of S3 to S5 CBS, the EDB will soon issue comprehensive guidelines detailing the aforesaid new arrangements on immigration control and transportation, points to note and requirements on hygiene and health protection measures. Schools, parents and students must observe these guidelines."

The EDB wishes to thank the principals and teachers concerned who have been proactively arranging a series of supporting measures for S3 to S5 CBS within a tight schedule, including coordinating local school bus services. Currently, there are around 2 500 S3 to S5 CBS and we believe some of them will adopt the above arrangements to resume classes in Hong Kong. With the experience gained and review of the actual operation upon class resumption of CBS, the EDB will take into account factors such as the latest development of the epidemic, the transportation situation of the boundary control points, manpower arrangements as well as the remaining school days in this school year and explore the feasibility of making arrangements for CBS in other class levels to resume classes in Hong Kong. The EDB believes that schools and teachers will, as they have been doing all along, continue to assist CBS in the Mainland in sustaining their learning at home with different learning modes (including e-learning).

In the meantime, classes of Kindergarten Three to Primary Three in Hong Kong will resume on the same day (June 15). The EDB appeals to parents and students to stay vigilant and follow the series of special precautionary measures at school. The EDB will continue to communicate with schools and the Centre for Health Protection of the DH to assist schools in adopting appropriate health protection measures, taking into account the development of the epidemic.